



A photograph of a landscape featuring a double rainbow. The primary rainbow is bright and clearly visible, arching across the sky. A secondary, fainter rainbow is visible just above and behind the first. The landscape below is dark, with a single tree in the center and a path leading towards the horizon. The sky is a mix of dark and light tones, suggesting a storm or late evening.

God's longing for God's people



I will make you into a great nation ...

I will bless you ...

I will make your name great ...

Genesis 12:1-3

God heard their groaning and he called to mind his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God looked down upon the children of Israel ... (Exodus 2:24-25).

I have seen the miserable state of my people in Egypt.
I have heard their appeal I mean to deliver them and bring them to a rich land (Exodus 3:7-8).

I will adopt you as my people. I will be your God ... I will bring you to your own land (Exodus 6:7-8)

We have sinned (2 v12) ... **gaze upon us**, O Lord, from your holy throne and **incline your ear**, and **heed us** (v16).

Listen O Lord and **be merciful**, for you are a **merciful God**, and **so merciful to us**, for we have sinned before you (3:2).

You are a God **ready to forgive**, gracious and **merciful**, slow to anger and abounding in **steadfast love** (Nehemiah 9:17b)

In your **great mercies** you did not make an end to them or forsake them, for you are a **gracious and merciful God** (9:31)

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in **steadfast love**.

He will again have **compassion** on us;

He will tread our iniquities underfoot.

You cast all our sins into the sea.

You will show **faithfulness** to Jacob

and **steadfast love** to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from days of old (Micah 7: 18-20)

Yahweh, Yahweh, a God of **tenderness and compassion**, slow to anger and abounding in **steadfast love and faithfulness** (Exodus 34:6)

For the Israelites, God was a God of *rahamim* (womb compassion) as well as *hesed* (steadfast love).

- Compassion (rahamim)

- God's instinctive attachment to us

- Tenderness and loving kindness

- Womb love

- Quickness to pardon



I will heal their disloyalty;

I will love them with all my heart ... Hosea 14:5a).

How can I give you up, O Ephraim! How can I hand you over, O Israel! ... My heart recoils within me, my **compassion grows warm and tender**. I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst (Hosea 11:8-9).

Does a parent forget the baby
at the breast or fail to cherish
the child of her womb?

Yet even if these forget,
I will never forget you.

See I have branded you
on the palm of my hand (Isaiah 49: 14-16).



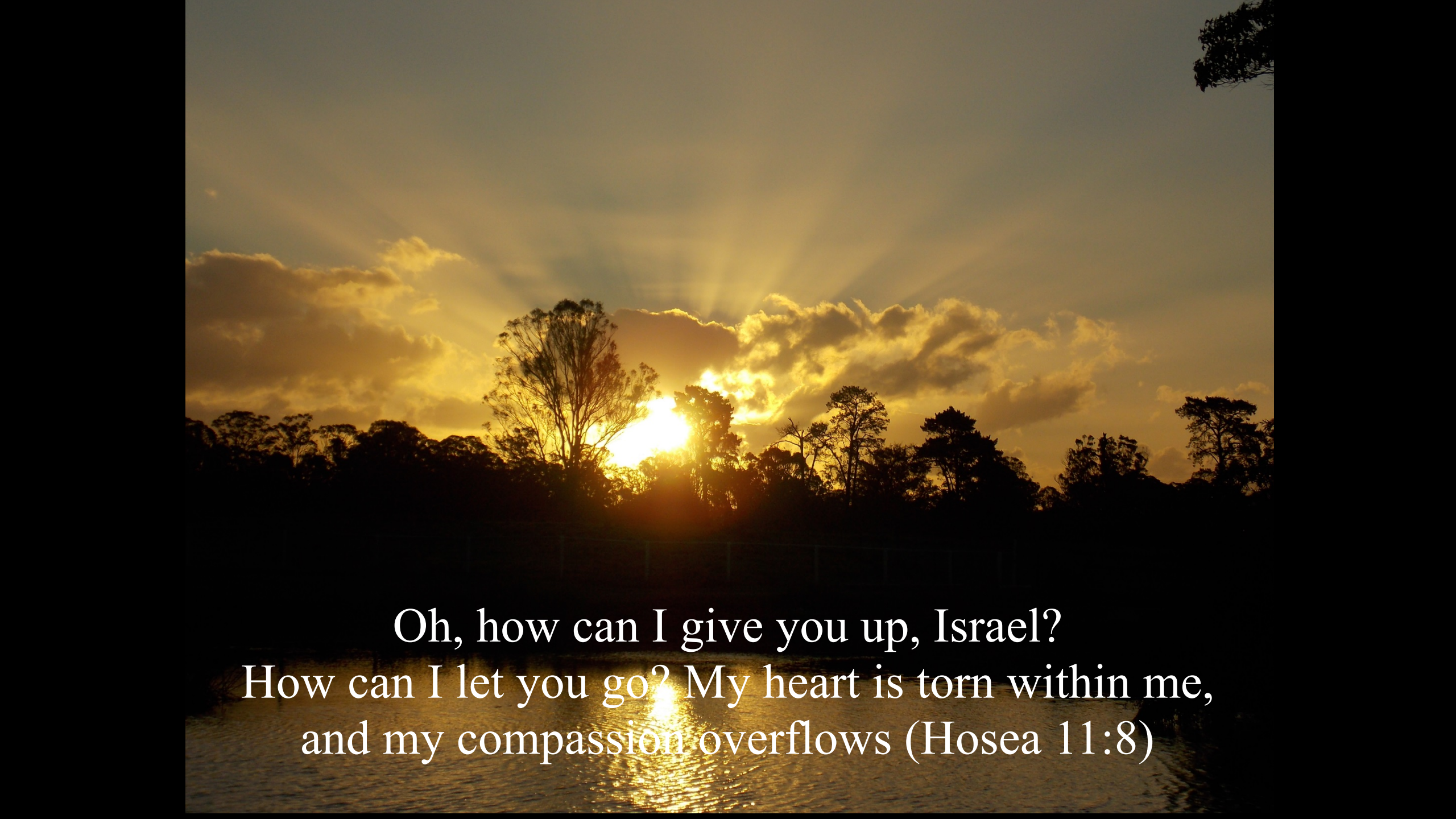
For the mountains may depart,
the hills be shaken, but my love for you
will never leave you and
my covenant of peace with you
will never be shaken ... (Isaiah 54:10)

I have loved you with an everlasting love,
so I am constant in my affection for you
Jeremiah 31:3

A close-up photograph of a single, large white flower with a yellow center, surrounded by green grass and a wooden post. The flower is the central focus, with its petals fully open and showing a slight pinkish tint. The background is a mix of green grass and brown, dried leaves, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. A wooden post is visible behind the flower, and a red object is partially visible in the upper right corner.

Tenderness and compassion

Yahweh, Yahweh, a God of tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in kindness and faithfulness (Ex 34:6b)

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, partially obscured by a line of dark trees. The sky is filled with golden light and scattered clouds. The sun's reflection is visible on the water's surface. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

Oh, how can I give you up, Israel?
How can I let you go? My heart is torn within me,
and my compassion overflows (Hosea 11:8)

God's *tenderness* transcends human tenderness.

It is a love that nothing can stop.

God is madly in love with us

tenderness is occasioned by human misery

an instinctive tenderness united God to Israel

(and us) forever

It is through God's **MERCY**
that we enter ever more deeply
into the mystery of
DIVINE TENDERNESS



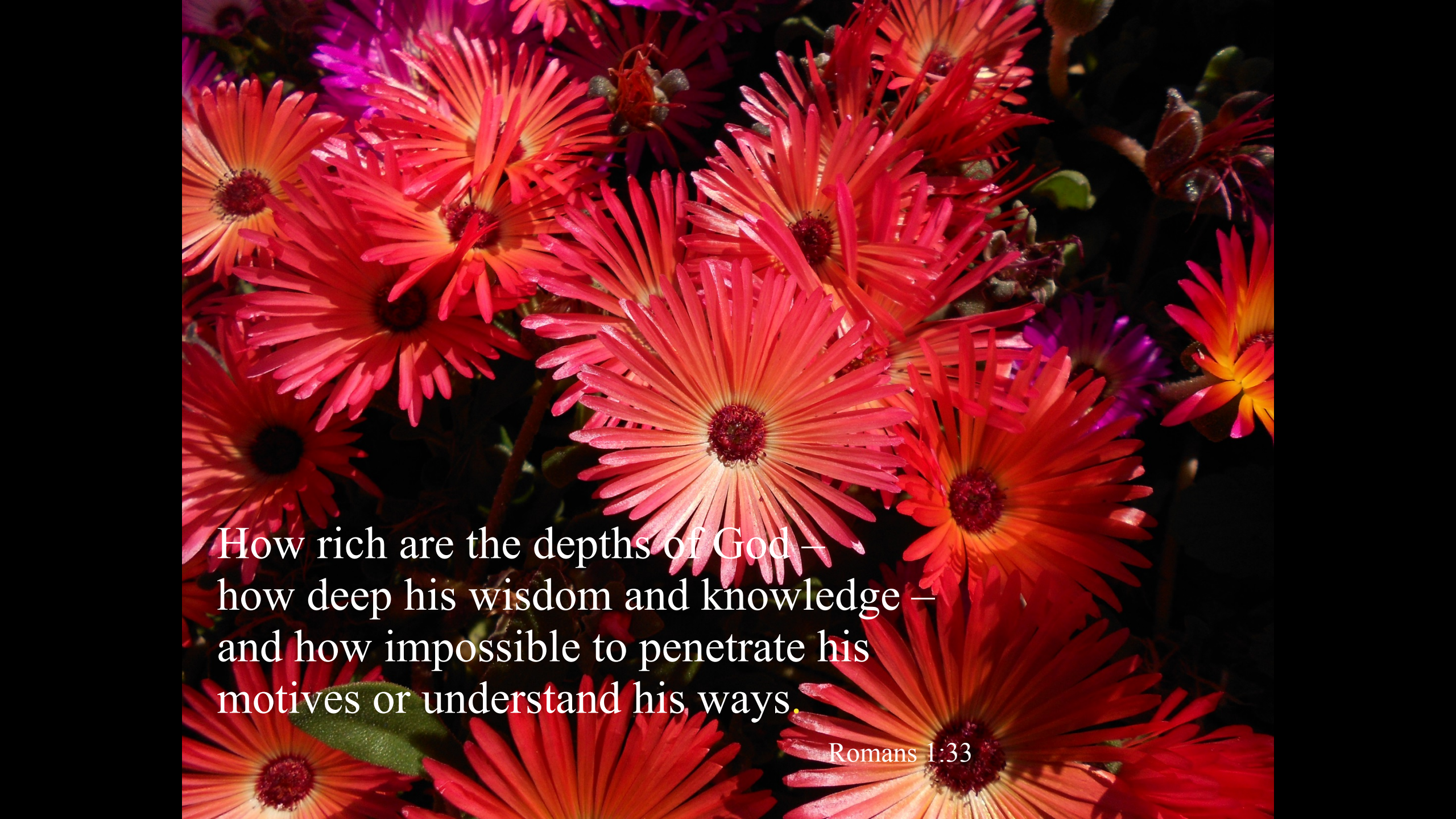
THE MERCY OF GOD

I am copying down in a book from my heart's archives
the day that I ceased to fear God with a shadowy fear.
Would you name it the day that I measured my column of virtue
and sighted through windows of merit a crown that was near?
Ah, no, it was rather the day I began to see truly that I came forth
from nothing and ever toward nothingness tend,
that the works of my hands are a foolishness wrought in the
presence of the worthiest king in a kingdom that never shall end.
I rose up from the acres of self that I tended with passion
and defended with flurries of pride;
I walked out of myself and went into the woods of God's
mercy, and here I abide.

There is greenness and calmness and coolness,
a soft leafy covering from the judgment of sun overhead,
and the hush of His peace, and the moss of His mercy to tread.
I have naught but my will seeking God;
even love burning in me is a fragment of infinite loving
and never my own.

And I fear God no more;

I go forward to wander forever in a wilderness
made of His infinite mercy alone (Jessica Powers)



How rich are the depths of God –
how deep his wisdom and knowledge –
and how impossible to penetrate his
motives or understand his ways.

Romans 1:33

God loved the world so much that God gave his only Son (John 3: 16a)



The Word became flesh, and lived among us (John 1: 14a)



Born in 1491 at the castle
of Loyola above Azpeitia

Contemplation
of the Incarnation



An anchoress and
mystic 1342 - 1416

Revelations of
Divine Love



There are two central characters in the parable,
the lord and his servant

Her understanding had the Son saying to the Father. “Behold, my dear Father, I stand before you in Adam’s tunic all ready to jump up and to run. I am willing to be on the earth to do your honor when it is your will to send me.

Julian then saw Adam, all humankind, as inseparable from the Son.

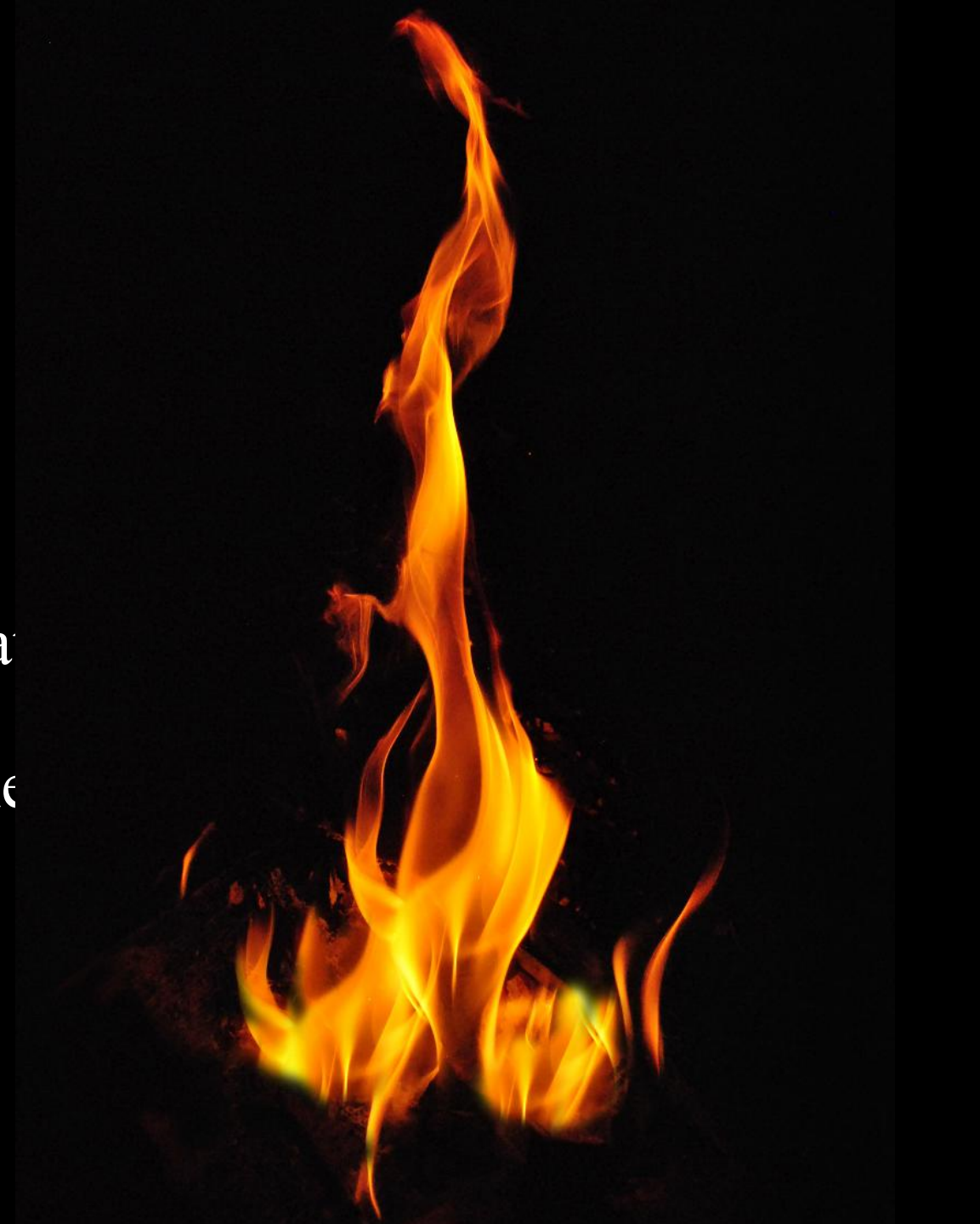
The first Adam failed, and is totally understood by the Father. This represents, as it were, half of the story. The other half is the new

Adam, Jesus, who underwent so much suffering to free us and show us who we are and how to live.

‘Would you know your Lord’s
meaning in this? Learn it well.

Love was his meaning.

Who showed it to you ? Love. What
did he show you? Love. Why did he
show you? For love.



Let the same mind be in you,
that was in Christ Jesus,
who, because he was in the form
of God, did not regard equality
with God as something to be
grasped, but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.
And being found in human form,
he humbled himself even more
and became obedient to the point
of death - even death on a cross
(Phil 2:6-8).



Palm Sunday Ritual



The mystery of Jesus Christ himself, with the wood of the cross, with the power of his love that is given, knocked from the side of the world at God's door; on the side of the world that was not able to find access to God. With his cross, Jesus opened God's door, the door between God and humankind. Now it is open. But the Lord also knocks with his cross from the other side: he knocks at the door of the world, at the doors of our hearts, so many of which are frequently closed to God (Pope Benedict, WYD, Palm Sunday 2007).

Having this mind in you ... is the goal for all humanity ...

Jesus let go of his identification with his divine self; he

"emptied himself" ... In this act of kenosis Jesus

revealed divinity on a whole new level.

We have to let go of our identification with being merely human -- and all the humiliation of our human faults and limitations -- which is a lot of letting go. In letting go of our shame, guilt, and powerlessness, we do not lose ourselves, but fall into our foundational and grounded self, which is our True Self, or divine self in God, which Jesus revealed - our own unique amalgam of quite ordinary humanity, which we receive from our parents, and divine DNA, our real life which is divine, that we inherit from God (Richard Rohr).

Anointed with the spirit we are brought into a new order that is transformative ... we are interiorly re-ordered so that we can be in the world with a new heart, mind and understanding.



The Gift of the spirit is that we have a new identity and life, the indwelling in divine life, which is our true life. We indwell in Christ and he in us.

I am in my Father,
and you are in me,
and I am in you.

John 14:20

Having this new life, we really can't go on as if this were not our reality. Our identity can't be separated from Christ: ours is to live his life as we allow Christ to shape us.

We are called to continue the incarnation
by living out the death and resurrection of Christ in our lives.



Self-giving is the fullness of being. It is Eucharistic. It is our
'YES' to God, lived in all the circumstances of our daily lives.



From the heart of Jesus
pierced on Calvary,
I see a new world coming
forth: a great and life-giving
world, inspired by love and
mercy; a world which the
Church must perpetuate on
the whole earth (Jules
Chevalier, MSC)